

**Connecticut School-Based  
Diversion Initiative**

## The School Based Diversion Initiative: Reducing Exclusionary Discipline and Promoting Restorative Justice

Youth and Urban Violence Committee  
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# Background

Nationally, fewer juvenile court referrals, but still concerning *proportion* referred from schools

## Unmet mental health needs and academic risk

- **20%** of all children meet criteria for MH diagnosis
- **65-70%** among youth in detention
- **80-90%** in detention w/ significant trauma exposure
- Students arrested **2X** likely to not graduate; **4X** if processed through court
- DMC still present;
  - exclusionary discipline impacts youth of color
  - youth w/ special education needs

Expenditures per pupil range from 12K-26K for CT Districts

## School proportion of all juvenile court referrals:

- 19% 2011-2012
- 14% in 2012-2013
- 15% in 2013-2014
- 20% in 2014-2015

# Background

- Initial support: John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
  - Models for Change, Mental Health/Juvenile Justice Action Network
- Current state funding partners:
  - Judicial Branch - Court Support Services Division (CSSD);
  - State Department of Education (SDE)
  - Department of Children and Families (DCF)
  - Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)

# School-Based Arrests in the News

## 4 Monroe, MI students arrested after food fight

*Posted: Mar 29, 2012 By Lisa Strawbridge*



## Police handcuff Georgia kindergartner for tantrum

*Posted: Apr 17, 2012 5:44 PM EDT*  
By JEFF MARTIN and JERI CLAUSING  
Associated Press



## Washington Post

**April 28, 2012 by Donna St. George**

The Maryland State Board of Education has expunged the disciplinary records of two lacrosse players suspended last year for carrying a knife and a lighter in their gear bags.



## CT Health Investigative Team

**Dec. 14, 2011**  
By Lisa Chedekel

"...That October, she received a call saying her 10-year-old son was in the principal's office with a police officer who was preparing to arrest him for giving a younger student—a girl—a wedgie on the school bus. His parents were dumbfounded..."

# The Cost of Arrest and Incarceration

Nationally, between 2001 and 2011, there has been a 45% reduction in youth incarceration

- In 2011, 62% of all committed youth were adjudicated for non-violent offenses.
- To incarcerate one youth in Connecticut:
  - \$607.41 per day
  - \$221,705 per year
  - Compared to the national average of \$148,767/year

The cost to youth and families (e.g., educational disruption, recidivism, dropout)

# The School Based Diversion Initiative

SBDI Video

<http://www.ctsbdi.org/sbdi-model/video/>

# Goals of the School-Based Diversion Initiative

**Reduce** the number of discretionary arrests in school; reduce expulsions and out-of school suspensions

**Build** knowledge and skills among teachers, school staff, and school resource officers to recognize and manage behavioral health crises in the school, and access needed community resources

**Link** youth who are at-risk of arrest to appropriate school and community-based services and supports

# SBDI Core Components

## Community Coalition Building

- Care Coordination; youth and family engagement; police and SROs; Probation; Youth Service Bureaus; Juvenile Review Boards; LISTs
- Referral to mental health services and supports, especially Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services (EMPS); available by dialing 211; free of charge for families; rapid mobile response (90% or higher); linkage to ongoing care

## Professional Development

- Teachers, administrators, SROs, social workers, guidance, psychologists
- Training modules include: Effective Classroom Behavior Management; Adolescent Development; Cultural Competence; Recognizing Mental Health Symptoms

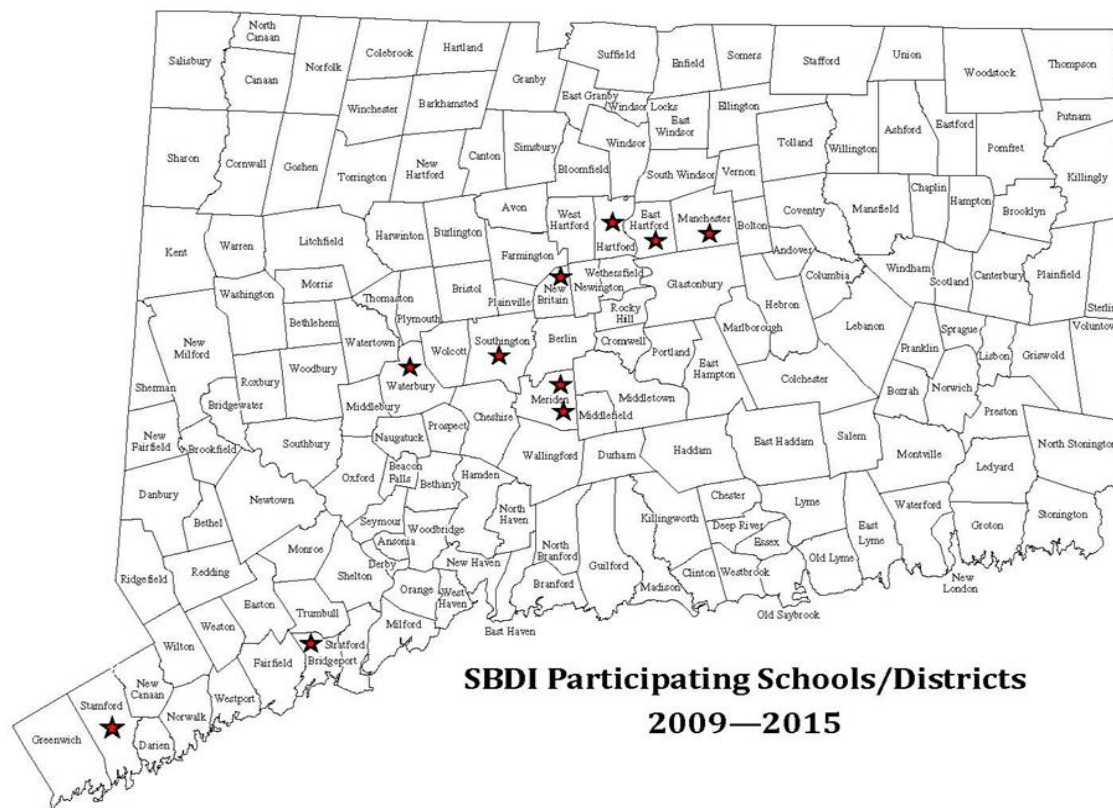
## Discipline Policy Consultation

- Review disciplinary policies; reduce emphasis on law enforcement; increase emphasis on services and supports; graduated response; restorative practices





# Participating Schools



## Bridgeport Public Schools

Luis Muñoz Marin School

## Consolidated School District of New Britain

New Britain High School

## CT. Technical High School System

H.C Wilcox Technical High School (Meriden)

## East Hartford Public Schools

East Hartford High School

East Hartford Middle School

## Hartford Public Schools

Academy of Engineering and Green Technology at Hartford Public High School

Culinary Arts Academy at Weaver High School

Sarah J. Rawson School

## Manchester Public Schools

Illing Middle School

Manchester High School

## Meriden Public Schools

Francis T. Maloney High School

Orville H. Platt High School

Venture Academy

## Southington Public Schools

John F. Kennedy Middle School

Joseph A. DePaolo Middle School

## Stamford Public Schools

Cloonan Middle School

Westhill High School

## Waterbury Public Schools

Crosby High School

Enlightenment School

Wallace Middle School

West Side Middle School



Child Health and Development Institute of Connecticut, Inc.

# Connecticut School-Based Diversion Initiative

Referrals to  
Behavioral  
Health  
Service

**UP  
94%**

Among the 18 schools that have participated in SBDI since 2010, those schools on average have reduced court referrals by 45% in their first year of participation, and have increased EMPs referrals by 94%.

School-Based  
Court  
Referrals

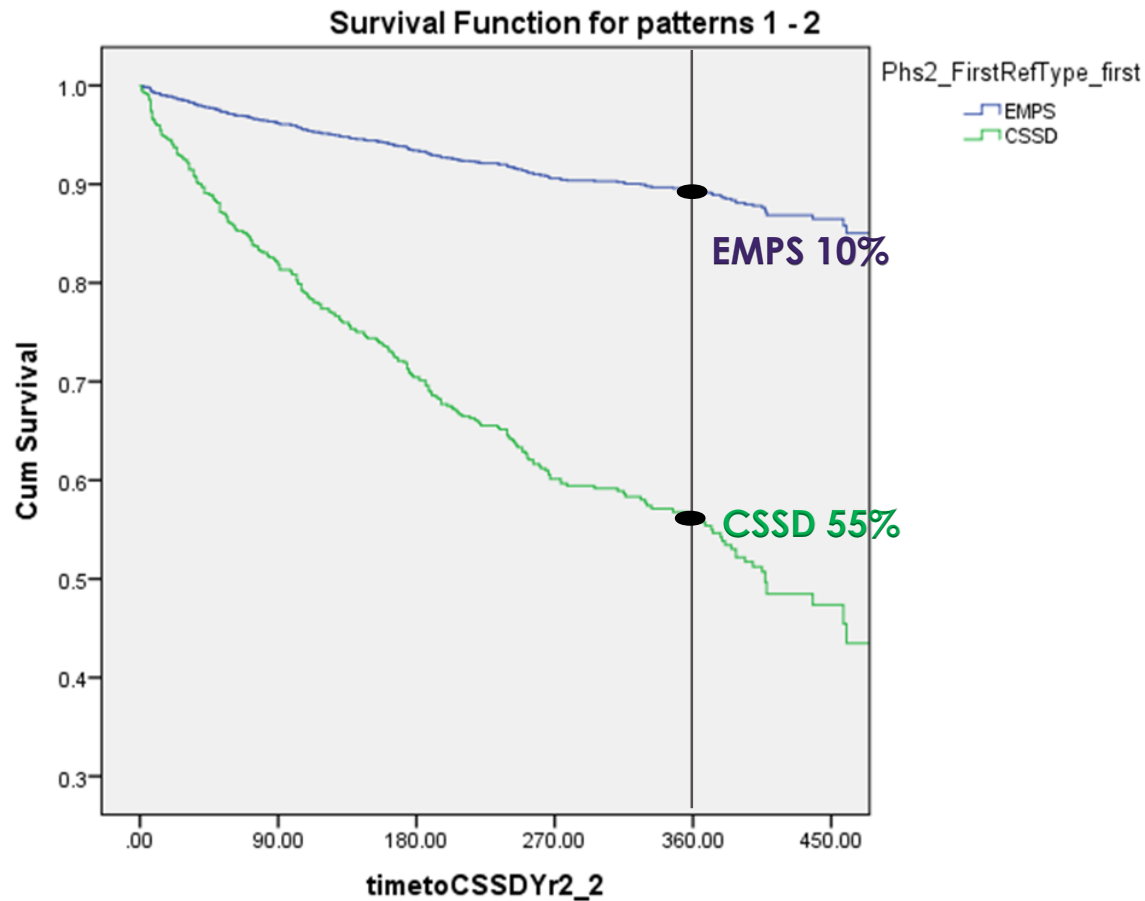
**DOWN  
45%**

The Connecticut School-Based Diversion Initiative is helping transform school discipline and improve student outcomes. Instead of arresting and suspending children with behavior problems, SBDI schools are connecting them to community-based behavioral health services.

Learn more at:  
[www.chdi.org/sbdi](http://www.chdi.org/sbdi)  
and [www.ctsbdi.org](http://www.ctsbdi.org)

Connecticut School-Based  
Diversion Initiative

# Community Impact

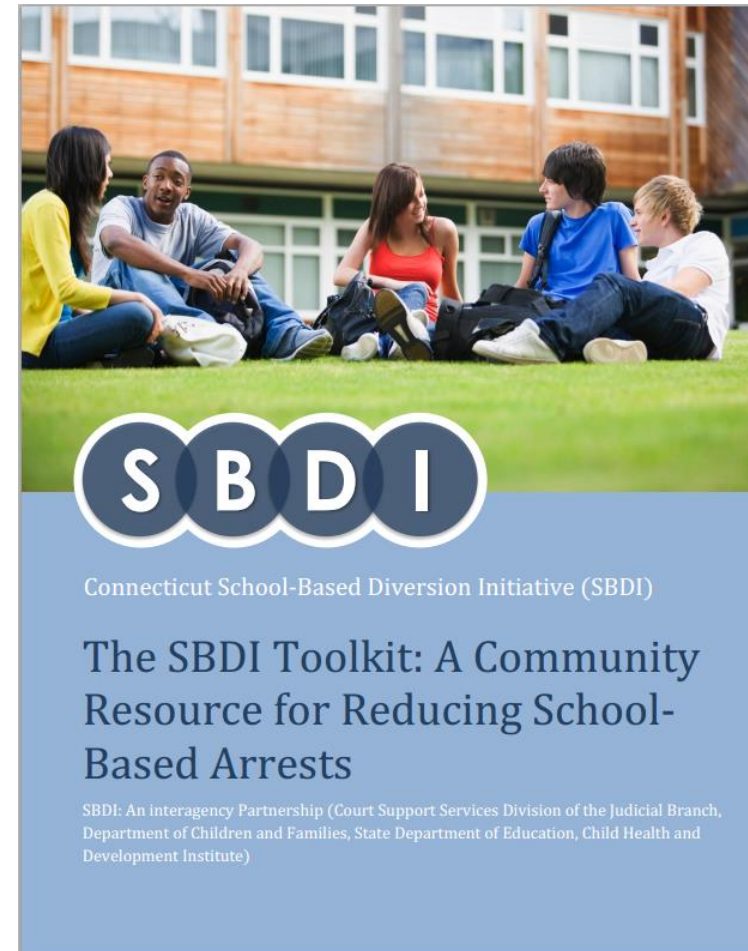


# SBDI Toolkit

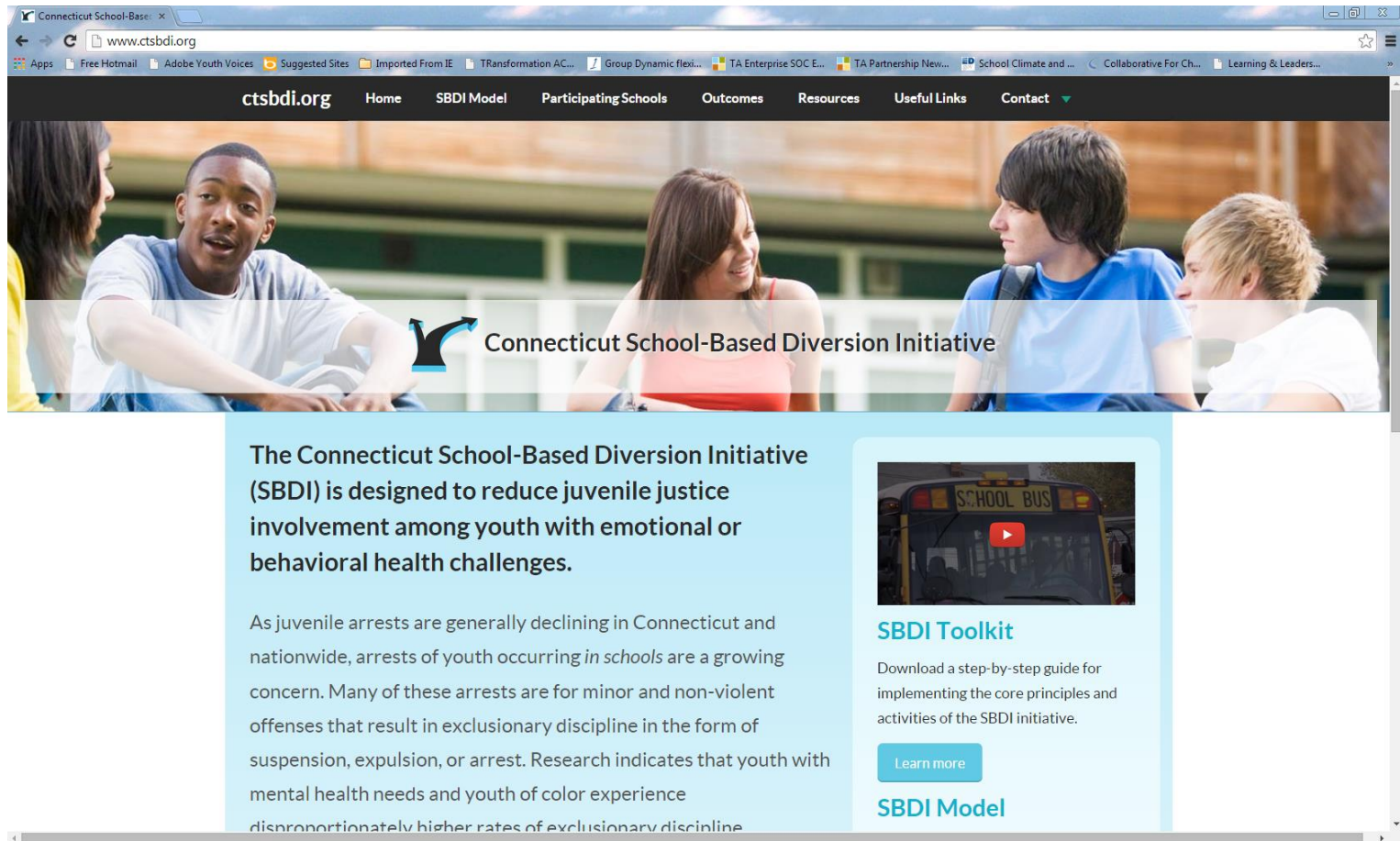
We recognized a need to reach **more schools, more quickly**

Toolkit was designed for a school to **self-implement some of the core principles and activities** of SBDI

Available for **free download**  
<http://www.chdi.org/SchoolToolkit>



# SBDI Website [www.ctsbdi.org](http://www.ctsbdi.org)





# Next Steps

Implement statewide expansion

Increase emphasis on restorative practice/justice in schools

Engage in comprehensive evaluation (i.e., evidence-based practice, cost study, Results First)

Launch “Learning Community” to support participants and sustain outcomes

Contribute to JJPOC goals to drastically increase diversion rates



## Contact Information

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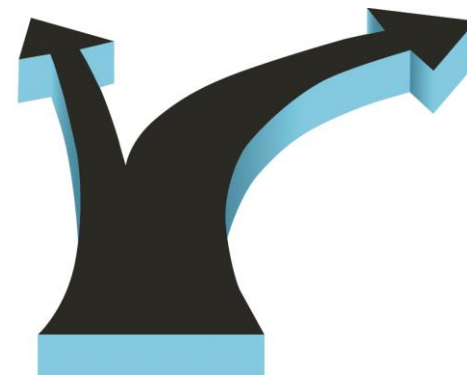
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